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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON DEBT FORGIVENESS, JULY 27, 2005

1. On 07/27 the Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily, "La Tribuna," published an op-ed by Gustavo Adolfo Aguilar, former UNAH professor and member of AUNA (Unity for our America Association) entitled "Debt Forgiveness and the Fight against Poverty." "Only recently, and with the help of the World Bank and the United Nations, has poverty been talked about as our society's fundamental problem."

"This issue's increasing importance does not only address the noble task of developing and improving the life of the people, but it is also, for less altruistic reasons, the focus of political discussion for those who govern and those who wish to govern in the future."

"The conceptual and operational deficit caused by poverty leads to the implementation of plans and programs that only disguises it, such as the promotion of informal economy."

"Poverty in Honduras is an alarming reality, as it maintains its presence in current economic and political conditions."

"If we are unable to pay off our debt, where will we find those billions of lempiras that the government says will be used in the Poverty Reduction Strategy?"

"We will continue to analyze the subject."

2. Op-ed by Rafael Andino Delgado Elvir in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "La Prensa" entitled "Covering Social Debt." "The discussion has started and it was expected to happen because it is a historical moment. A lot of years of discussion and peoples' sacrifice had to pass. It is possibly a little late, but it is welcomed by those who see every day as a challenge to survive."

"There is no doubt debt forgiveness won't solve all the problems."

"Another problem is the assigning of funds. We hope that proposals are abundant and that the government and social institutions work efficiently in to meet the most urgent needs."

"Finally, I have to point out the problem with resource management. We think it is necessary to include everybody in this process and watch over the investment of these valuable funds. So that this debt forgiveness doesn't become the usual party of the greedy."

3. Op-ed by Tulio Mariano Gonzales Garcia in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "Tiempo" titled "Pinata." "Hondurans are really different, with all this debt forgiveness and the availability of next year's four billion lempiras, now that 'experts' have arose suggesting how the relief should be invested."

"Spokespersons from civil society, which nobody nominated them as such, are the most willing to give out suggestions and make recommendations."

"Trust in Porfirio Lobo is evident, who as a creative, intelligent and capable politician, knows the necessary strategies that will ensure that the debt forgiveness and Millennium Challenge funds are invested properly and there will be no room for 'pinatas' or free for all."

Tuebner